In the Claims:

Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application.

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1. (original) A method in a computer system for exchanging economic data with a user, comprising:

 receiving a request from a user for a first item of economic data, the first item including at least one of wage data, cost of living data, cost of labor data and employee benefit data;

 retrieving the first item of economic data from a database;

 providing over the Internet a web page for view by the user, the web page displaying the first item of economic data;

 receiving a second item of economic data from the user over the Internet in exchange for the first item of economic data, the second item of economic data including at least one of wage data, cost of living data and employee benefit data;

 checking the second item of economic data for validity by determining whether the second item of economic data is consistent with economic data in the database of the same type as the second item of data;

 updating the database to include the second item of data if the second item of data is determined to be valid; and

 providing the first item of economic data to the user free of charge.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein determining whether the second item of economic data is consistent with the economic data in the database includes determining whether the second item falls within two standard deviations of a mean for data in the database averagable with the second item of data.

3. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein receiving the second item of economic data includes receiving at least one of the user's geographic location, position, years of experience in the position, annual salary and annual bonus or incentive payment.

4.   (original) A method in a computer system for exchanging economic data with a user, comprising:

receiving over a computer network a user request for a first item of economic data;

retrieving the first item of economic data from a database;

providing a first display description for view by the user over the computer network, the first display description including the first item of economic data;

providing a second display description for receiving a second item of economic data;

receiving a second item of economic data from the user over the computer network; and

at least reducing a fee due from the user for receiving the first item of economic data.

5.   (original) The method of claim 4 wherein at least reducing a fee due from the user includes eliminating any fee due from the user for the first item of economic data.

6.   (original) The method of claim 4, further comprising:

assigning a first value to the first item of economic data;

assigning a second value to the second item of economic data; and

calculating a fee due from the user for receiving the first item of economic data by subtracting the second value from the first value.

7.   (original) The method of claim 4 wherein providing the first item of economic data includes providing domestic and/or international wage data, cost of living data, cost of labor data and/or employee benefit data.

8.   (original) The method of claim 4 wherein receiving the second item of economic data from the user includes receiving economic data specific to the user.

9.   (original) The method of claim 4, further comprising checking the second item of economic data for validity.

10.   (original) The method of claim 4 further comprising checking the second item of economic data for validity by determining whether a numerical value of the second item is within about two standard deviations of a mean for data in the database that is of the same type as the second item of economic data and averagable with the second item of economic data.

11.   (original) The method of claim 4, further comprising updating the database to include the second item of economic data.

12.   (original) The method of claim 4 wherein the user request is a first user request and wherein the method further comprises:

receiving over the computer network a second user request for economic data;

retrieving economic data from the database in response to the second user request after the database has been updated to include the second item of economic data; and

displaying the economic data to the user over the computer network in response to the second user request, the economic data being based at least in part on the second item of economic data in the database.

13.   (original) The method of claim 4 wherein the first item of economic data can be based on a plurality of data sources, and wherein the method further includes receiving a request that the data be based on a selected subset of the plurality of data sources.

14.   (original) A computer-readable medium storing or transmitting instructions which, when implemented by a computer perform a method for exchanging economic data with a user, comprising:

receiving over a computer network a user request for a first item of economic data;

retrieving the first item of economic data from a database;

providing a display description for view by the user over the computer network, the display description including the first item of economic data;

receiving a second item of economic data from the user over the computer network; and

at least reducing a fee due from the user for receiving the first item of economic data.

15. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 14 wherein at least reducing a fee due from the user includes eliminating any fee due from the user for the first item of economic data.

16. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 14 wherein providing the first item of economic data includes providing domestic and/or international wage data, cost of living data, cost of labor data and/or employee benefit data.

17. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 14 wherein receiving the second item of economic data from the user includes receiving economic data specific to the user.

18. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 14, further comprising checking the second item of economic data for validity.

19. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 14, further comprising checking the second item of economic data for validity by determining whether a numerical value of the second item is within two standard deviations of a mean for data in the database of the same type as the second item of economic data and averagable with the second item of economic data.

20. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 14 wherein the method further comprises updating the database to include the second item of economic data.

21. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 14 wherein the request is a first request and wherein the method further comprises:

receiving over the computer network a second user request for economic data;

retrieving the economic data from the database in response to a second request from the user after the database has been updated to include the second item of economic data; and

displaying the economic data to the user over the computer network, the economic data being based at least in part on the second item of economic data in the database.

22. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 14 wherein the first item of economic data can be averaged from a plurality of data sources, and wherein the method further includes receiving a request that the data be based on a selected subset of the plurality of data sources.

23. (original) A method in a computer system for receiving and providing economic data, comprising:

inputting over a computer network a request for a first item of economic data;

receiving a first display description over the computer network, the first display description displaying the first item of economic data;

receiving a second display description over the computer network requesting input of a second item of economic data;

inputting the second item of economic data over the computer network in response to the request for the second item of economic data; and

paying a reduced fee or no fee for the first item of economic data in return for providing the second item of economic data.

24.   (original) The method of claim 23 wherein receiving the first item of economic data includes receiving domestic and/or international wage data, cost of living data, cost of labor data and/or employee benefit data, and wherein inputting the second item of economic data includes inputting domestic and/or international wage data, cost of living data, cost of labor data and/or employee benefit data.

25.   (original) The method of claim 23 wherein inputting the request for the first item of data includes inputting the request over the Internet, and wherein inputting the second item of economic data over the computer network includes inputting the second item of economic data over the Internet.

26-46. (canceled)

47.   (original) A method in a computer system for updating a database with economic data provided by a user over the Internet, the method comprising:

    providing a database accessible to users over the Internet, the database having economic data including wage data, cost of living data, and/or employee benefit data based on a first sample size;

    responding to a first request for economic data by retrieving first output data from the database, providing the first output data over the Internet and indicating over the Internet the first sample size;

    receiving input data over the Internet, the input data including wage data, cost of living data, and/or employee benefit data;

    updating the database to include the input data received over the Internet and updating the sample size to be a second sample size greater than the first sample size;

    receiving a second request for economic data over the Internet;

    retrieving second output data from the database and providing the second output data over the Internet in response to the second request, the second output data being based at least in part on the input data received over the Internet; and

indicating over the Internet that the sample size on which the second output data is based is the second sample size.

48.   (original) The method of claim 47 further comprising at least reducing a fee for the first output data in response to receiving input data.

49.   (original) The method of claim 47, further comprising determining whether the input data are consistent with data in the database by determining whether the input data are within two standard deviations of a mean for data in the database averagable with the input data.

50.   (original) A method for providing a user with economic data over the Internet, comprising:

    providing over the Internet a display description identifying a plurality of databases for economic data, the economic data including at least one of compensation data, cost of living data and employee benefits data with at least two of the databases providing similar types of data obtained from different sources and based on different populations;

    receiving a selection from a user over the Internet of one of the databases;

    receiving a query from the user over the Internet for data contained in the one database;

    retrieving data from the one database in response to the query from the user; and

    displaying to the user over the Internet the data corresponding to the query.

51.   (original) The method of claim 50 wherein identifying a plurality of databases includes identifying a first database containing data gathered by a governmental entity and identifying a second database containing data received from users over the Internet.

52.　(original) The method of claim 50 wherein the first and second requests are received from a single user.

53.　(original) The method of claim 50 wherein the first request is received from a first user and the second request is received from a second user.

54.　(original) The method of claim 50, further comprising checking the input data for validity by determining whether the input data are consistent with economic data in the database of the same type as the input data.

55.　(original) The method of claim 50 wherein a single user receives the first output data and provides the input data over the Internet, and wherein the method further comprises:

assigning a first value to the economic data provided in response to the first request;

assigning a second value to the input data received over the Internet; and

calculating a fee due for the first output data by subtracting the second value from the first value.

56.　(original) The method of claim 50 wherein a single user receives the first output data and provides the input data over the Internet, and wherein the method further comprises at least reducing a fee due from the single user for receiving the first output data.